

LISTING OF CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. This Listing of Claims replaces all prior versions and listing of claims in the present application.

Please delete claims 1-13, 16-18, 20-22, 27, 30, 31, 33-36, 39, 40, 45, 48, and 49, without prejudice.

Please amend claims 14, 15, 19, 23-26, 28, 29, 32, 37, 38, 41-44, 46, and 47 as follows:

14. (Currently Amended) A method for reducing the oxygen concentration in a modified atmosphere package [~~which comprises an oxygen sensitive material~~], comprising [~~the steps of~~]:

- (a) placing an oxygen scavenging packet in the package, said oxygen scavenging packet comprising:
 - (i) a plurality of side walls defining an enclosed space; and
 - (ii) an oxygen absorber within the enclosed space, said oxygen absorber comprising iron, silica gel, a carbon dioxide generator, and an electrolyte, said iron is electrolytically annealed and reduced, said electrolyte is chosen from the group consisting of acids and salts, said silica gel is impregnated with said carbon dioxide generator;
- (b) introducing a liquid oxygen uptake accelerator comprising water directly onto said oxygen absorber; and
- (c) immediately sealing the modified atmosphere package;

wherein the amount of liquid oxygen uptake accelerator which is introduced into said packet is [~~an amount in the range of~~] from about 0.2 mL [~~and~~] to about 0.8 mL for each 2.5 grams of iron.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein said oxygen uptake accelerator is present in said packet in an amount [~~between~~] from about 0.3 ml [~~and~~] to about 0.7 ml per approximately 2.5 grams of said iron.

16-18. Cancelled.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein said oxygen uptake accelerator is contained within a frangible capsule and further including rupturing said tangible

capsule such that the oxygen uptake accelerator is introduced directly onto ~~[the]~~ said oxygen absorber ~~[by rupturing the frangible capsule]~~.

20-22. Cancelled.

23. (Currently Amended) The ~~[oxygen scavenging packet]~~ method of claim 22, wherein said acid is acetic acid or citric acid.

24. (Currently Amended) The ~~[oxygen scavenging packet]~~ method of claim 22, wherein said salt is a metal salt.

25. (Currently Amended) The ~~[oxygen scavenging packet]~~ method of claim 24, wherein said salt is a copper salt.

26. (Currently Amended) The ~~[oxygen scavenging packet]~~ method of claim 22, wherein said salt is selected from the group consisting of NaCl, CaCl₂, and MgCl₂.

27. Cancelled.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein said packet further comprises ~~[a]~~ means for introducing said liquid oxygen uptake accelerator directly onto the oxygen absorber.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein ~~[said step of]~~ introducing said oxygen uptake accelerator directly onto said oxygen absorber includes injecting said oxygen uptake accelerator onto said oxygen absorber.

30-31. Cancelled.

32. (Currently Amended) A method for minimizing metmyoglobin formation in fresh meat which is contained within a modified atmosphere package, comprising ~~[the steps of]~~:

- (a) placing an oxygen scavenging packet in the package, said oxygen scavenging packet comprising:
 - (i) a plurality of side walls defining an enclosed space; and
 - (ii) an oxygen absorber within the enclosed space, said oxygen absorber comprising iron, silica gel, a carbon dioxide generator, ~~[and]~~ an electrolyte, and an acid, said iron is electrolytically annealed and reduced, said electrolyte is chosen from the group consisting of acids and salts;

- (b) introducing a liquid oxygen uptake accelerator comprising water directly onto said oxygen absorber; and
- (c) immediately sealing the modified atmosphere package;

wherein the amount of liquid oxygen uptake accelerator which is introduced into said packet is ~~[an amount in the range of]~~ from about 0.2 mL ~~[and]~~ to about 0.8 mL for each 2.5 grams of iron.

33-36. Cancelled.

37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, wherein said oxygen uptake accelerator is contained within a frangible capsule and further including rupturing said frangible capsule such that the oxygen uptake accelerator is introduced directly onto ~~[the]~~ said oxygen absorber ~~[by rupturing the frangible capsule]~~.

38. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, wherein said oxygen uptake accelerator is contained within a bibulous wick, wherein said wick extends from the exterior of said packet, through at least one of said plurality of side walls and into said enclosed space.

39. Cancelled.

40. Cancelled.

41. (Currently Amended) The ~~[oxygen-scavenging packet]~~ method of claim 40, wherein said acid is acetic acid or citric acid.

42. (Currently Amended) The ~~[oxygen-scavenging packet]~~ method of claim 40, wherein said salt is a metal salt.

43. (Currently Amended) The ~~[oxygen-scavenging packet]~~ method of claim 42, wherein said salt is a copper salt.

44. (Currently Amended) The ~~[oxygen-scavenging packet]~~ method of claim 40, wherein said salt is selected from the group consisting of NaCl, CaCl₂, and MgCl₂.

45. Cancelled.

46. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, wherein said packet further comprises ~~[a]~~ means for introducing said liquid oxygen uptake accelerator directly onto the oxygen absorber.

47. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, wherein ~~[said step of]~~ introducing said oxygen uptake accelerator directly onto said oxygen absorber includes injecting said oxygen uptake accelerator onto said oxygen absorber.

48. Cancelled.

49. Cancelled.